

The Hong Kong Daily Press.

No. 6459 一九五〇年八月六日 日六月七日寅戌紀光

HONGKONG, WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 14TH, 1878.

三月 每四月八日 清香

[PRICE \$24 PER MONTH.]

SHIPPING.

ARRIVALS.

August 16, SURPRISE, French gunboat, Commander Giron, Shanghai 5th August.
August 13, HALONG, British steamer, 277
Gode, Tamsui 8th August, Amoy 10th,
and SWATOW 12th. General D. La-
PEAK & Co.

August 13, BRISBANE, British steamer, J.
A. Reddell, Sydney 25th July, Cleve-
land Bay 30th, COOKTOWN 1st August,
General GIBSON, LIVINGSTON & Co.

CLEARANCES.

AT THE HARBOUR MASTER'S OFFICE
AUGUST 13TH.

Acraton Apeas, British steamer, for Singa-
pore, Penang, and Calcutta.

MORAY, British str., for Singapore, Penang,
and Calcutta.

Normandy, British steamer, for Singapore

and Sydney.

St. Ilde, French bark, for Tientsin.

DEPARTURES.

August 13, ADRIA, British str., for Bombay.
August 13, OREISHA, Brit. str., for Yokohama.
August 13, AZORES, Apcar, British str.,
for Singapore, Penang, and Calcutta.

August 13, PEARY, British str., for Singa-
pore, Penang, and Calcutta.

August 13, NORMANDY, British steamer, for
Singapore and Sydney.

August 13, LORENZ, British str., for Hoipo.

August 13, ALBAY, British str., for Hoochow.

PASSAGERS.

Arrived
Per Huijou, str., from Tamsui, &c.—
47 Chinese.

For Macao, 20 Chinese. From Sydney.

From Calcutta—10 Chinese. From Sydney.

Lord R. Gower and 14 Chinese. From Cook-
town—3 Europeans and 17 Chinese.

DEPARTED.

Per Acraton Apeas, str., for Calcutta, &c.—
Mr. and Mrs. Nathan, and 130 Chinese.

For Macao, 20 Chinese. From Sydney.

1 Indian cabin, and 130 Chinese.

For Normandy, str., for Singapore, &c.

Messrs. F. Engblad, D. Malmsten, G. Hooper
and 24 Chinese.

REPORTS.

The French Surveiller reports left
Shanghai on 5th August, and had fresh S.E.
monsoon from White Dogs to port.

The British steamship *Haikong* reports left
Tamsui on 8th August, and arrived in New
York the 9th and experienced a strong
head wind, which was in SW at noon, and left
again at 1 p.m. and had south sea and light winds, and
left again at 12th, and from chance to port
had moderate S.E. winds and wet weather.

In Swatow H.M.S. *Grouper*, steamers *Cedelial*
and *Eloisa*. In Swatow U.S.S. *Alert*, steamers
Hoching, *Yungting*, *Afghanistan*, and *Chooey*. Passed
the steamship *Nance* of Chinglong Point. Passed
the steamship *Oressa* of the Nina Pines.

The British steamship *Brisbane* reports left
Sydney on 25th July, arrived in Cleve-
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The Daily Press.

HONGKONG, AUGUST 14TH, 1878.

THE correspondent of the Shanghai Courier who writes from Yokohama is inclined to take a very gloomy view of the state of affairs in Japan. The assassination of the Home Minister Okuso was undoubtedly a political act, and the document addressed by the murderer to His Majesty the Mikado is of revolutionary character, but we have as far heard nothing to prove that these few fanatics represented any influential faction in the Empire. There is doubtless some discontent still smouldering among the samurai, but they have received a sharp lesson in the suppression of the late insurrection in Kiushu and will scarcely risk a fresh struggle. Besides, the writer in the Courier obviously does not believe that danger lies on that side; he thinks it arises from the Radical party, who would fain rule before they can well walk alone—who are eager to try the experiment of representative institutions. We are disposed to class this correspondent with the pessimists, who are over discerning clouds on the political horizon and foretelling storms which never break. There may be real difficulties before the Japanese Government, and they may—and we trust will—be ultimately compelled to concede a constitution to the country, but we see no reason for a fresh civil war, and believe it can be avoided. As for the Mikado, we have always heard that the veneration, respect, and love entertained for him and his exalted position is deeply rooted in the breasts of the people. Japan has, it is sincerely to be hoped, passed through her baptism of political fire, and will henceforth go on peacefully and steadily towards the development of a sound and stable administration based on constitutional principles. But this cannot be accomplished in a day, and it is folly to expect the Japanese Government to grant such concessions all at once and before the people are qualified to exercise electoral rights and duties.

We have received several complaints, besides those recently published in our correspondence column, respecting the sampan nuisance in the harbour of Hongkong. Every vessel arriving in port is immediately surrounded long before anchoring by a swarm of sampans, which cannot be driven off and seriously impede the navigation of the ship. The nuisance is really no imaginary one. When a ship arrives in port the officers and crew are of course busily engaged in anchoring her and have little time to spare to look after moveable property. The knowledge of this fact no doubt renders the harbour thieves so eager to get on board. At all events, numerous robbers are committed on board vessels, and most of them take place directly after arrival. The hurry and confusion then prevailing make the thief's opportunity. Field glasses, telescopes, watches, and jewellery are the articles which find most favour with these marine robbers, but few things compare in value with the dogs.

There provided there is little risk of discovery. This is minimised by the precautions adopted by the rogue, who quietly drops their booty over the side, when it is caught by their confederates in a boat beneath. They are fruitfully in expedient, and go armed with good excuses for their presence on board lest any one should happen to suspect them.

Great as is the nuisance caused by the thieving propositives of these uninvited visitors on board incoming vessels, however, it is by no means the only one. They obstruct the fairway of the steamer by getting under her bows, and crowd under her stern, rendering it exceedingly difficult to avoid accidents. If the master of a steamer in casting anchor smashed two or three sampans to pieces, or broke up several by a few turns of the propeller, he would probably be asked to pay the damages, whereas, as a matter of fact, he would not be morally responsible for loss either of property or life caused by the native craft impeding the anchorage of his vessel. He might, all the same, be put to a great deal of trouble thereby, and it is to avoid such disasters that shipmasters are so long-suffering. It occurs to us that the Police should do more to prevent this nuisance. They do every now and then arrest a party of these marine thieves and bring them up before the magistrates, but they are not present at every arrival and, perhaps, it is impossible for them to board each ship as soon as it enters the harbour. At the same time, something should be done to abate the nuisance, and that without delay. We understand that the water police were shortly to be provided with steam-launches. If so, they would be enabled to reach every newly arrived vessel before the sampans can get to her, and ought to have no difficulty in keeping suspicious craft at a respectable distance. Under existing circumstances we can well understand that the task is one of extreme difficulty.

At the Police Court yesterday, before Mr. Gough, the owner of sloop No. 1290 was charged with being a roader extra of another boat which was made fast to the stern of a ship, and was discharged with a caution.

The British steamer *Nippon*, Captain Hurnis, after having undergone some extensive repairs at the Kowloon Dock, went on a trial trip yesterday round the island and succeeded in making ten knots per hour.

Sixty-four persons were charged before Mr. Gough yesterday with being a roader extra of another boat which was made fast to the stern of a ship, and was discharged with a caution.

On Monday a fatal accident occurred on board the bark *Red Arabic*. A seaman named Peter Quar was aloft on the main top-gallant-ward when he lost his hold and slipped, striking his back on the topsail yard, and fell into the sea. He sank immediately and did not rise. The party boats dragged round about the vessel for some time with no result.

At the Marine Court yesterday, before Mr. J. P. McLean, George Alderson, an apprentice on the British steamer *Karo*, was charged P.C. Bond with deserting from his ship on the 4th instant. The prisoner said he did not like the vessel, and had had badly used. Sent to one month's imprisonment with hard labour, or until the return of the steamer, he was read over to the objects for boot-hill, and said he had no boot-hill.

The defendant was then produced and the defendant denied the signature and said it was a forged signature. He admitted that he had been paid off and was engaged by the owner commanding the iron of six tons for iron and that the defendant signed the book. A short time ago witness summoned a soldier for striking him. The defendant was called as a witness. When they were in the barracks room the defendant took his book from his belt and handed it to the soldier with the words, "This is mine." The soldier took the book from him and did not say anything further about it. On the 25th the Chiji of the Tokio-in was again interviewed on the subject, and made proposals which could not be entered into. The authorities have since definitely refused to allow the artisans to proceed—Japan Gazette.

Colonel Great Wheeler said the plaintiff was not entitled to sue for wages, as he was allowed to purchase cheap boots at \$15.25 a pair. There was no limit as to what amount they might get. There was no authority for them to get anything from the plaintiff but boots, shoes, or hats. The shoemaker kept a book in which the soldier put down his regimental number and name and the price agreed upon, and this was a voucher that the things were delivered. The plaintiff said he had given every month, and witness noted off the books and entered them in the account. The soldier then signs the accounts. In this case the defendant had not done so. When the account was read over he objected to the items for boot-hill, and said he had no boot-hill.

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EXTRACTS.

THE GUITAR IN PORTUGAL.

The guitar is certainly to our critical northern eyes an execrable instrument, and a man who plays upon it in an English drawing room can no more hope to preserve his appearance of manly dignity than if he were piping upon a fagoted or blowing upon that most hideous of all instruments—the flute. That is man should be, well, look, sentimentally emotional under the painful circumstances of being tied by a ribbon to such an instrument; is, however, clearly a matter of conventionality. In many parts of Portugal men play upon the guitar naturally and as a matter of course; they strain as we Englishmen would. The peasants are universally given to play upon this instrument, not often, however, according more to a simple accompaniment of—such as the claves or open gourd players, and as they walk to and from their work in twos and threes, they lighted the journey with an accompaniment of song. My companion always brings his guitar with him when he comes to a job. He is a fair performer, but his skill is small. I think he has a lighter touch on the instrument, and his tones are certainly fuller.—*Corral de Magarre*.

THE CAUSE OF OLD BACHELEROHOOD.